

FREE National Edition **FREE**

WHAT'S THE POOP?



'63 Monroe

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London Free Press Year End Top 10 Local Albums 12/22/07

8. '63 Monroe: Last Exit to Rawk n Roll (Speed City Records)

Old glampunkers never fade away -- they just rawk, loud and louder against the dying of the night.

So it is with The Legendary '63 Monroe -- as it says, ever so modestly, on the cover of this fine rip from our ageless heroes. Even Tex Ritter via John Prine is embraced on the way to The Last (definitely not Last) Exit to Rawk n Roll.

Frontman Scott Bentley parties on like a long, tall philosopher time warped back to 1977. Bassist Pete Dukaker offers nuggets of punk wisdom. Everybody else makes sure the loop blitzkriegs on and on.

Words to live by: "I'm free, let it be -- if only for two minutes 33."

'63 MONROE - ON THE LOOSE!

Jan 4th

The Horseshoe, Toronto

Showcase with '63 Monroe & the Saigon Hookers

Jan 19th

The Underground, Hamilton

'63 Monroe

G-Men

the Clusterbombs

The Holy Fathers

Die Standing

10 bucks cover

Feb 9th

The Buttocks Up, Brantford

'63 Monroe

the Clusterbombs

The Stiff Wires

COLLECTORMANIA!

Collecting 1983 - and the Story of '63 Monroe

by Chuck Miller

Frank Soyke contacted me a few weeks ago via the Internet. Frank is a music collector who has found his own niche collection - searching for popular music from the year 1983.

1983 - the year when the pop charts were dominated by such artists as the Stray Cats, Men At Work, Pat Benatar, Journey - and some guy named Michael Jackson. "I have copies of every 45 to hit the US Hot 100, as well as the British Top 50 Charts, plus others that did not chart. Over 1200 45's from 83 alone."

But why 1983? Why not 1982 or 1984 or 1967? "I find it the quintessential year in modern music," says Soyke. "It was a time when the 'New Wave' and techno sound often associated with the decade really came into prominence and began to dent the American music charts. In my record collecting travels, I found many people singling out that year as a watershed year for modern music. Actually, when most people cite '80's music' the examples most often given are songs from 83. It was really the year when what is sometimes the 'Second British Invasion' started. Groups that had been popular for years in Britain and Europe (Depeche Mode, The Cure, Heaven 17, Ultravox, etc.), finally started to gain radio airplay (as well as many fans) on this side of the Atlantic. From April-August 1983, there were sometimes as many as 24 foreign artists on American Top 40. A record that stands to this day. Basically, in 83, the US fans were discovering music from other parts of the world for the first time since the mid 60's. It changed the sound of CHR. No longer were easy listening favorites like Neil Diamond, Barbra Streisand and Dan Fogelberg dominating the charts. Now synthesizers and overproduced vocals were all the rage. Music changed in 1983. Changed for the better, at least temporarily. Testament is given to music from that era by the abundance of retro stations, clubs, and TV ads. that play 80's music and 9 times out of 10, 80's music that is heard is from 1983."

Collecting the hits from 1983 isn't hard, but finding the songs that barely creased the Top 40 is difficult. Tracks like Sonny Charles' "Put It In A Magazine" the Psychedelic Furs' "Run and Run", and Martin Briley's "Salt In My Tears" were hard for Soyke to find. "These are also pretty easy to find on LP compilations, but the original 45's are all but impossible. Note that the Valley Girl soundtrack album is one of the most sought after and rare albums of the 80's."

Thanks Frank. That letter brought back some memories for me as well - not only memories about 1983 and music (Men at Work with the Red Rocks opening, Saratoga Performing Arts Center, 7th row center tickets), but also of some of the band our college radio station WHCL played in the early 1980's. Think about it - for every group like Hootie and the Blowfish or Sugar Ray that made it big, there are thousands of bands who never got that lucky break. Groups like Alecstar - Roger Wilco and the Radio Waves - Mambo X - the New York Flyers - Crossfire Choir - Broken English - the Serious Young Insects - the Chefs of the Future.

But sometimes there's a story behind these bands that is more than just a slab of vinyl and a catchy name. You probably have groups like this in your record collection, artists whose music you've enjoyed - even if nobody else ever cared. And therein lies a tale.

It's the spring of 1984. I was in Boston, attending one of those college radio conventions where everybody gets schmoozed with new music and tapes and CD's by the record companies. I can't remember what the name of the club was where the convention took place, but while I was looking for the club, a car pulled up. Getting out of the car were four guys who looked like they drove all night to get there.

Since the club doors didn't open for another 15 minutes or so, we struck up a conversation. I found out the name of the band was '63 Monroe, they were from London, Ontario and had driven all night to this show in the hopes of getting their first record, a punk-pop remake of "I'm Henry '8' - The Am" into the hands of some enterprising disc jockeys. I asked them to please let me have a copy of their record - they gave me two. We entered the club where the convention was being held, but the group and I went our separate ways - I had to get promotional records for my dear old college station, WHCL.

After the show, I brought the collection of vinyl loot back to upstate New York, to the radio station that most people felt was actually my dorm away from dorm. Normally I would listen to all the discs and see what (if anything) was worth playing on the station, but I had a paper due on a comparison between William Faulkner and Eudora Welty, so I barely had a chance to listen to the '63 Monroe song before putting it in the singles rack and hoping somebody would give it a chance.

Did they ever - within two weeks, the speedy version of '63 Monroe's "Henry The Eighth" (Savvy \$02) became a hot request item. I told other college program directors and music directors in the college radio circuit about the record (we didn't have chatrooms or internet bulletin boards; that's why those college radio station conventions were so important); I posted glowing responses to the song on the CMJ New Music Report; I sent copies of the playlists back to London Ontario, showing the group that their song made it big in central New York - for whatever heavy rotation on a 270-watt radio station was worth.

Around December 1984, while checking the radio station mailbox for new releases, I received a package from London, Ontario. It was two copies of '63 Monroe's second single, a version of Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" with guitars ablazing and a goofy drawing of Santa Claus in bondage. I took one of the copies to WHCL, but on the way to the station I noticed something on the back cover of the single sleeve - a list of acknowledgments. Included among all the thank-yous and Christmas wishes was a thank you for Chuck Miller and WHCL.

My name on a record jacket. Pre-printed, no ballpoint or pencil on this one.

What a wonderful feeling that was, seeing my name attached to the picture sleeve. To have an artist giving thanks for taking a chance on their record. Sure it may have been a small band on a tiny independent label, who may never have had another hit in their lifetimes... but to me it was a fantastic moment. It meant that for all the promises the major record label college reps gave college stations about giving their colleges four stops and awarding gold records and setting up interviews that never came, somebody out there actually acknowledged independent college radio stations and the people who work there, playing records between their work-study jobs and taking Organic Chemistry pass-fail.

I never found out what happened to '63 Monroe - maybe they transmogrified into some superstar Canadian band; maybe these records were the only vinyl they ever put out. But when I received Frank Soyke's letter about bands from 1983, it brought back memories of a band whom I wanted to thank for their unselfish Christmas gift 15 years ago.



Killed by Death #10

comp. LP

redrum records. 1 / 19 tracks / 1997 (?)

Part 10, US-only again. No big surprises, no wonder after all these comps. A few great but well-known tracks (like Normals or VPs), plus some obscure ones which are part good (Count Vertigo, Sick & the Lame), part boring. Still a solid volume, if only to hear the stuff on your want list...

Vomit Pigs - useless actor / Trojics - laughing
 lower / Descendants - unnotational anthem /
63 Monroe - hijack victim / Executives - jet set /
 Grim Klone Band - host's rising / Jehovah's
 witness / Cringa - spit on your grave / Voodoo
 Idols - we dig Nixon / Red Squares - time change
 / Gentlemen of Horror - god knows you by
 name / Normals - almost ready / Discords -
 dead cubans / Trans - band aid / Count Vertigo -
 x-patriots / Unnatural Axe - the creeper /
 Skinnies - out of order / Endtables - circumcision
 / Sick & the Lame - ate dogs a week

'63 Monroe w/ The Dropouts; Priestess; The Lewd Junkies @ Call the Office

by: Josh Geddis (Saturday, October 23)

Once again the power of London's '63 Monroe drew many of London's old school punk community to the Office.

The Lewd Junkies were first up. Calmly taking the stage and nodding to the crowd, they struck their first distorted note and the ride began. Their sound was fast, dirty, and sloppy. Everything a good punk band should be.

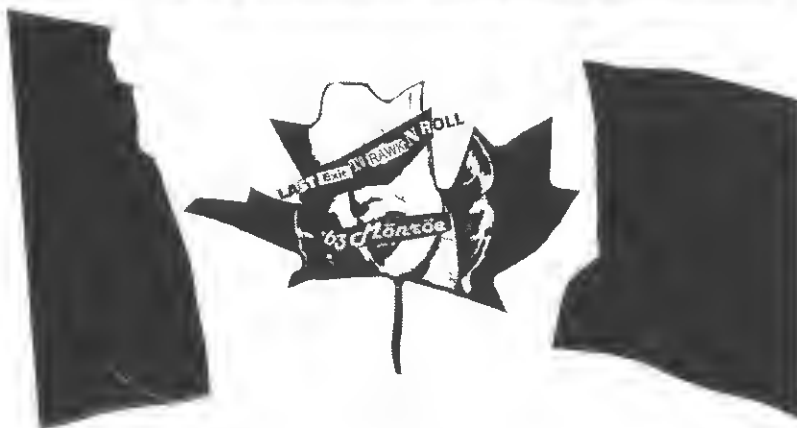
Priestess made the long trek from Montreal to treat the CTO crowd with their gut wrenching stoner rock. These boys were incredible, their muffled distorted sound quickly conjured up comparisons to Mudhoney, and they do live up to it. The most compelling thing was their stage presence. Pausing only once between songs, to flip off the crowd, Priestess delivers the balls out stoner rock they promise.

The Dropouts followed, and delighted the crowd with their psycho-rockabilly sound. A healthy combination of the Misfits and Crash Vegas, The Dropouts capitalize on their female singer. Her borderline operatic vocals are the ray of light shining through the band's dark, yet catchy riffs.

Then it was time, the crowd began buzzing as four members of '63 Monroe took the stage. After a few brief moments, many crowd members began scanning the bar. Searching for the elusive, fifth member.

From the first note, '63 Monroe had a white knuckle hold on the crowd. They could do no wrong in front of the home town audience. Tearing into classics such as Hijack Victim, it's strangely comforting hearing a crowd (the majority aged 30 and above) singing along to these glam punk anthems, it truly displayed the respect the band has earned since the 80s.

No words can really describe their live show, those who have seen them know what I mean. From cross dressing, to taunting the crowd, to being too drunk to stand, '63 Monroe is glam-punk in its most basic, and honest form.





'63 Monroe

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**Once feared dead and bloated...
Found alive and bloated...
But ready to Rawk!**

GANESHA ZINE

indie & underground music

Banda: (The Legendary) 63 Monroe

Album: Last Exit to rawk n roll

Esa aclaración que agregaron al inicio de su nombre no es en vano. Estos canadienses vienen pateando la escena punk de London, Ontario (su ciudad) desde 1980.

Su sonido punk altamente influenciado por sus amigos The Demics y su estética glam así grotesca los proclama como los new york dolls de su pueblo.

Su sonido es rock n roll puro, con una voz muy entonada y riffs que parecen conmemorar a las clásicas estrellas de los años 50s.

El packagin del disco es muy agradable, ya que incluye glitter y estrellitas dentro de la caja.

(translated next issue)



63 MONROE

Hijack Victim - LP RUR#48

Glam Punk idols from Canada! This album is the definitive anthology of their great tracks recorded between 1980-84. All studio material taken from their mega rare first 12" (released under the name of NFG), "Stinkin' Out the Joint"

Lp, rare demos and unreleased tracks. The band appeared also in various compilations such "Killed by Death #10" and others... Be Glam, Be Punk! Enjoy 63 Monroe!